

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 16 without my signature. The addition of a new mandate, no matter how small, will only serve to increase the overall cost of health care.

California currently has 44 mandates on its health care service plans and health insurance policies. While these mandates are well-intentioned, the costs associated with guaranteed coverage means that these costs are passed through to the purchaser and consumer. These mandates are a significant driver of cost. Every day, a growing number of employers and individuals are struggling to pay for their health care. We cannot afford to increase these costs without enacting other measures that improve efforts aimed at prevention, address affordability of care and share responsibility between individuals, providers, employers and government.

For these reasons, I am returning this bill without my signature.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger